



PATENT

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October 19, 2004

Ayesha J. Shaikh

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicants : Aaftab Munshi and
Colin Sharp

Attorney Docket No.: 500497.01

Serial No. : 09/759,789

Group Art Unit : 2671

Filed : January 11, 2001

Examiner : Almis R. Jankus

Confirmation No. : 2852

Date of Notice
of Allowance : October 6, 2004

Title : APPARATUS AND METHOD FOR GRADIENT MAPPING IN A GRAPHICS
PROCESSING SYSTEM

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COMMENTS ON STATEMENT OF REASONS
FOR ALLOWANCE

Sir:

In the Examiner's reasons for allowance, he states each independent claim is allowable because the prior art does not teach or suggest a particular element or elements recited in each of the claims. While applicants agree with the Examiner's indication that the prior art does not teach or disclose the particular elements cited by the Examiner, the undersigned would like to point out that each claim includes a combination of elements and it is the recited

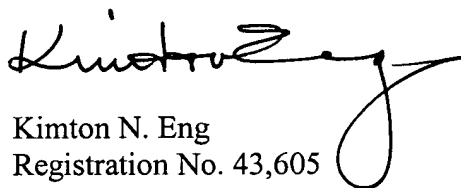
combination, which includes the elements cited by the Examiner, that is not disclosed nor suggested by the prior art.

The Examiner further states that the preamble of claim 6 is given patentable weight because "it recites essential structure or steps." The Applicants do not agree with the Examiner that the preamble of claim 6 necessarily recites structures or steps that are "essential." Whether phrases in the preamble are to be given patentable weight is made on a case-by-case basis. The claim preamble should be read in the context of the entire claim, and determined if the preamble recites limitations of the claims, or is necessary to give meaning to the claim. The Examiner's statement ignores this standard and fails to provide the reasoning behind the assertion. The scope of claim 6 should not be limited by the Examiner's statement without any explanation from the Examiner.

While the combinations of elements recited in the allowed claims are allowable, the undersigned would like to point out that some or all of these individual elements may be broadened such that the resulting combination is still patentable. Applicants may elect to pursue such claims, or to pursue claims directed to other aspects of the present invention, through a continuation or reissue application, or through a reexamination proceeding.

Respectfully submitted,

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